VOLUME 10 *FIRST QUARTER 2000* NUMBER 1

ADVENTIST PIONEER LIBRARY

Lest We Forget

"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history." LS196

W. W. Prescott

Messenger of God's Invitation, "Come, for all things are now ready..."

(Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, p. 1455; September 25, 1895)

Family Background

William Warren Prescott was born September, 1855 in Alton, New Hampshire. His ancestry in the USA went back some 200 years, when a James Prescott from Derby in England settled in central New Hampshire.

William's grandfather, Amos, was a farmer and member of the Free-will Baptist church. William's father, James, had observed the falling of the stars at age 5 in 1833, and was baptized at age 10. Four years later, Amos and James heard Joshua V. Himes preach the advent message in Concord, New Hampshire. The family joined the Advent Movement.

James and his mother, Lydia, later heard S. S. Snow present his Bible study on Matthew 25 at the Exeter, New Hampshire campmeeting, which was the beginning of the "Midnight Cry" and the "Seventh Month Movement." The Prescotts, along with the other advent believers, now looked for the coming of Christ on October 22, 1844. That fall they left their grain and potatoes unharvested. The family weathered the shaking that "the passing of the time" brought.

In 1847 James married Harriet Tripp, and worked as a cobbler and self-supporting preacher with the believers that later formed the Advent Christian Church. In 1858, three years after William was born, the family became Sabbath-keeping Adventists. William was thus raised in a family open to truth and firm in conviction.

W. W. Prescott
Courtesy EGW Estate

With this issue we begin a series on the life and contributions of W. W. Prescott. While not one of the first generation Adventists from the 1850's (though his father was), he was acknowledged by Ellen White to be a "messenger" during the significant events of the 1890's. Issues 1 and 2 will cover his life, and 3 and 4 will focus on the Armadale Campmeeting in 1895 in Australia. The biographical material is drawn largely from Gilbert M. Valentine's book on Prescott, *The Shaping of Adventism.*

Education Years, 1868-1877

For his first three years of high school, William attended South Berwick Academy. Located in Maine, it was one of the state's oldest and most prestigious private schools. The summer after his junior year he was baptized at the age of 17 by J. N. Andrews at the Massachusetts campmeeting. William completed his last year at Penacook Academy in New Hampshire in 1873. Both academies had a strongly moral and religious environment while offering an education in the classics.

It was during his senior year that he met Sarah Sanders (also known as Sadie), who was a Sabbath keeper and at the time 16 years old. He would later marry her. Her older brother Charles was taking engineering at Dartmouth, and it was there William applied for college, enrolling the autumn of 1873.

As the only Seventh-day Adventist at Dartmouth, William's commitment to stand alone was developed. He personally appealed to the president to be excused from classes on Sabbath. After an interview, this privilege was granted to him for the four years he attended.

He majored in "classical studies," taking courses in Greek, Latin, French, mathematics, mechanics, astronomy, logic, physics, rhetoric, psychology, geology, English literature, morals, Christian evidences, and political economy. He was in the top six of his class throughout his four years.

While standing for principle and excelling in academics, he was well accepted on campus. His many school activities included singing in the Handel Society, engaging in the debating societies, winning several first prizes in athletic competitions, and serving as vice-president and then president of his class in his final two years. He was also an editor of the weekly, student-published magazine.

During his four years he accumulated a full year of teaching experience in nearby schools. He graduated at age 21 in June of 1877 with a bachelor of arts. His academic standing entitled him to give a graduation oration. He spoke for six minutes on "The Office of the Thinker."

As was the practice at that time, he would qualify for a master's degree after three years working in his profession based on his academic accomplishments. He delayed requesting this degree until 1885 when he assumed the presidency of Battle Creek College.

As a background for later issues he would face in SDA educational settings, Prescott had been introduced at South Berwick Academy to "school homes." During his time at Dartmouth, agricultural training had just begun. Manual labor was also being tested in educational settings during the last decades of the 1800's.

Early Work, 1877-1885

For two years after graduating from Dartmouth, Prescott served as school principal in Northfield, Vermont. In 1879 he became principal at the most prominent school in Montpelier, Washington County Grammar and Montpelier Union School. The following summer, on July 8, he married Sarah Sanders. He was twenty-four and she, twenty-two.

That summer he moved to Maine, where he and his younger brother, Charles, had purchased the newspaper in Biddeford. They renamed it *The Biddeford Weekly Journal*. Its four pages focused on Republican politics, and included advertisements, moral stories, news, and temperance issues. Two years later Charles, no longer a Seventh-day Adventist, bought out William's interest in the newspaper. Charles went on to become well known in the state's business and political circles.

William and Sarah purchased Vermont's leading and oldest Republican newspaper, the *Vermont Watchman and State Journal,* and moved back to Montpelier in April of 1882. His publishing business prospered, even though he was closed on Saturday as well as Sunday. His willingness to agitate for reform, educational or political, involved him in controversy and criticism.

In June of 1885, the trustees of Battle Creek College (founded 1874), unsuccessful in their calls to two other SDA educators, met with Prescott about heading up the college. He was just shy of 30 years old. Having heard Ellen White and G. I. Butler preach at the 1883 campmeeting in Montpelier, and having discussed his burden with Uriah Smith at the 1884 campmeeting in Burlington, he had become convicted that God wanted him in church work. He sold the paper in Montpelier, and moved that summer to Battle Creek, beginning fifty-two years of work for the church.

Battle Creek College President, 1885-1894

For the next nine years Prescott worked hard to mold the college to train workers for the church with stricter discipline and higher academic standards. He traveled

extensively recruiting students, almost doubling the number of students to over 700 by 1894. He also oversaw a building program, paying for more than 10 percent of the costs himself. In addition, Prescott gave of his personal funds to students in need.

Woven through these years were the practical challenges of educational reform as called for by Ellen White's testimonies, being the application of the principles of the gospel to education. Prescott's willingness to receive the gospel message and learn how to implement these changes was challenged by his own background, and the resistance of students, parents, trustees, and the larger SDA community.

In 1888, just prior to the Minneapolis Conference, the Prescotts received the first of some 52 letters Ellen White addressed to him during her remaining ministry. She addressed the Prescotts as "my respected Brother and Sister," and "My dear Brother and Sister whom I highly esteem in the Lord." These appelations are unique based on a search of her published correspondence, and reflects the regard in which she held this couple. (10MR345, Letter 4, 1888). The Prescott's son Lewis was born in October of 1891.

—Working for a Higher Standard

The Prescotts lived with the students in West Hall. Strict etiquette was followed in the dining hall, with the students learning by the Prescotts' precept and example. Order was required indoors and out, in dress and in the school grounds. Brother Prescott led out in the daily chapel service whenever he was in Battle Creek and actively pursued the spiritual interests of these workers in training.

Policies such as the ban on courtship and restrictions on entertainment met with opposition from students and parents. His public and spirited approach led him in 1888 to preach two sermons at the Tabernacle, appealing for and winning support of these practices.

The manual labor program, clearly a balancing activity to the mental work, struggled with lack of finances and support by parents and students. The trustees stopped the program in 1889. In its place, influenced by his Dartmouth experience, Prescott set up a sports and gymnastics program. It quickly developed into competitive events, drawing many spectators on Sundays. This led Prescott to stop the games, but by 1893 football games again were in full swing. They were even reported in local newspapers, one of which came to Ellen White's attention in Australia. Her counsel to him led him to stop them again.

From 1891 to 1894 the issue of the diet for college students was agitated. Some college faculty, E. A. Sutherland and P. T. Magan, and board members, particularly J. H. Kellogg, M.D., pushed for a meatless diet, or at least more meatless options. Prescott found himself on the middle ground initially, but gradually moved toward the vegetarian option.

—In the Light of Minneapolis

The influence of the Minneapolis Conference in 1888 reached the college. Ellen White worked diligently that the message the Lord had given at Minneapolis would be heard at Battle Creek. Some six weeks after the conference session, the Week of Prayer planned for the church in Battle Creek, December 15-22, ended up lasting one month. Ellen White described that in these "revival services… the principle topic dwelt upon was

Timeline: Birth-1897

1855	Birth, Alton NH
1872	Baptized by J. N. Andrews
1877	Graduated Dartmouth; school principal, Vermont
1880	Married Sarah Sanders, bought newpaper in Maine with brother Charles
1882	Bought newpaper in Vermont
1885	Became Battle Creek College President (to 1894)
1887	GC Education Secretary (to 1897)
1888	First of 52 letters from Ellen White; Minneapolis Conference
1889	Organized first 5-month Ministerial Institute
1891	Joined GC Committee; GC Session Presentations; Harbor Springs Educational Convention; Union College Opens; son Lewis born
1892	Endorsed Anna Phillips; Walla Walla College Opens
1893	GC Session Presentations; compiled *Christian Education*
1895	GC Session Presentations; trip to Australia
1897	Compiled *Special Testimonies on Education*; Head of work in England (to 1901)

justification by faith." (RH2/12/1889, in 3Bio420).

On Thursday, December 20, Ellen White wrote in her diary, "I spoke to the college students. The Lord gave me the word which seemed to reach hearts. Professor Prescott arose and attempted to speak, but his heart was too full. There he stood five minutes in complete silence, weeping. When he did speak he said, 'I am glad I am a Christian.' He made very pointed remarks. His heart seemed to be broken by the Spirit of the Lord...." (Ms25, 1888, in 3Bio421)

Professor Prescott stood five minutes in complete silence, weeping.

Speaking further of the Scriptural light the Lord had given through brothers Jones and Waggoner, Ellen White wrote on March 10, 1890, "I am much pleased to learn that Professor Prescott is giving the same lessons in his class to the students that Brother Waggoner has been giving. He is presenting the covenants." (Letter 30, 1890, in *1888 Materials*, p. 623).

Later that year, Ellen White described the "wonderful" December 27 Sabbath meeting. "Nearly the whole congregation presented themselves for prayers, and among them, Brethren Prescott and Smith. The *Extra* in the *Review and Herald* [Dec. 23, 1890] was read, and the testimony of all was that the power of God attended the reading of the article. They said that this made a deep impression.... Professor Prescott made a confession dating back to Minneapolis, and this made a deep impression. He wept much. Elder Smith said that testimony meant him; said that he felt that it was addressed to him, but he stopped there and went no further. But both placed themselves as there repentant, seeking the Lord. Well, they said they had never had such a meeting in Battle Creek, and yet the work must be carried on, for it was just begun…." (Lt 32, 1891, in *1888 Materials*, pp. 850, 851)

The message continued to do its work against stiff opposition. Both A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner were finally allowed to lecture at Battle Creek College. Prescott, gradually seeing more and more light in the Christ-centered message, worked hard as a peace-maker and consensus builder between the opposing parties. After Ellen White was exiled to Australia in 1891, her writings on the message kept the Spirit's appeal before the church. In the November 22, 1892 *Review and Herald*, she wrote, "The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. For it is the work of every one to whom the message of warning has come, to lift up Jesus, to present him to the world as revealed in types, as shadowed in symbols, as manifested in the revelations of the prophets, as unveiled in the lessons given to his disciples and in the wonderful miracles wrought for the sons of men." (*1888 Material*, p. 1073).

The effect of this article on the college, along with other timely testimonies from Ellen White, led to a vigorous revival. The rest of the school term was disrupted by long chapels, seasons of prayer and confession, and times of testimonies. Prescott, in reading a letter from Ellen White to the students, was moved to tears, and confessed again his previous resistance to the message. Sadly, Uriah Smith viewed the events as "excitement". Thus the spiritual consensus the church greatly needed was never experienced.

—Added Responsibilities

At the 1887 General Conference, Prescott had been chosen as the General Conference education secretary. In this position he was absent from the college a significant amount of the time, as he oversaw the developing educational work of the church. In 1888 he was appointed to the church's book committee. By 1889 he found it necessary to delegate college administrative duties to a principal and committee. In 1891 he was put on the General Conference Committee, leading to much added responsibilities. His conscientiousness and leadership abilities made it very easy for him to overwork, about which Ellen White repeatedly warned him. GC president Olsen also recommended he get one or two men to assist him, but Prescott never did this. By 1894 the needs of the church's schools had grown to the point that Prescott was asked to oversee their work and development full time. He then relinquished the presidency of Battle Creek College.

General Conference Education Director, 1887-1897

During the time Prescott served as Battle Creek College President and the General Conference secretary

for education, he began the development of an educational policy for the church. He helped to coordinate the relationship of other schools to one another, including the exchange of faculty, thus avoiding duplication of courses, improving poor academic standards, and making it easier for students to transfer between schools.

—Ministerial Institutes

Against a background of minimal training for our ministers, and the controversy that boiled over at Minneapolis, Prescott designed a five-month ministerial institute for ministers. The first began in October of 1889, with 157 attendees. Prescott, Uriah Smith, and E. J. Waggoner were instructors.

In spite of Ellen White's strong endorsement, Waggoner's views were actively opposed by Smith, and led to her personally joining some of the early morning dialogues. Her letters, manuscripts, and diary entries written during the institute provide essential insights into what God was attempting to accomplish in these settings to prepare a people for Christ's coming. [The reader is encouraged to read the chronological collection of her writings on these issues in *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*.]

These institutes continued until 1896, by which time the colleges had developed more complete ministerial training courses. However, Ellen White lamented to the GC President in November of 1892 that ministers were not being benefited as they ought to have been by these gatherings. She said they either haggled over the truth, or having assented to it, kept it in "the outer court," not letting it permeate their lives in the "little things," particularly in the home setting (PH002:25,26).

She again spoke to the delegates at the GC Session in 1901 of the assent to this truth with no change in life or ministry. This counterfeit "faith" actually masked a deep-seated rebellion, which later that year she said might cause God's people to remain in this world "many more years." (*1888 Materials*, p. 1743; SpM202).

—Union College Established

At the 1889 Kansas campmeeting Prescott was instrumental in persuading the constituency to support a mid-western school. Ellen White was present along with A. T. Jones, working against the spirit of opposition seen at Minneapolis the previous fall. She supported the plan for a school, and by January of the next year property was purchased in Lincoln, Nebraska. Prescott chose the name "Union College" to encourage all of the conferences in the area to rally behind the school. When the school opened in September of 1891, Prescott, while still president at Battle Creek College and GC Education Director, served as its first president. It was a position he actively filled for two years, although J. H. Loughhead was the on-site principal.

—Educational Conventions

Prescott developed a master list of Adventist teachers (church employed or not) and began a program of teachers' training institutes. Two significant conventions were held, one in 1891 at Harbor Springs, Michigan, and one in 1894 at another location. Both focused on making SDA education more Bible centered. At the 1891 gathering a four-year curriculum was first developed for ministerial training. At the 1894 meeting, Prescott and A. T. Jones produced a four-year syllabus of Bible teaching for non-ministerial students. Plans were even laid for a graduate program (which was not realized for another sixty years) and an education journal (which took three years to begin).

GC Session Presentations

1891 GC Session
The Calling and Work of the Ministry
1893 GC Session
The Promise of the Holy Spirit, No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
The sermon on February 11 on the Sabbath
1895 GC Session
The Divine-Human Family, No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Education
The Word of God, No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
Christ and the Holy Spirit

(These are all on the CD-ROM *Words of the Pioneers, Second Edition*. Contact the Adventist Pioneer Library.)

—Walla Walla College Established

Prescott was instrumental, against significant opposition, in getting two Adventist conference schools in the Northwest to consolidate at Walla Walla, Washington. When the school

opened in December of 1892, Prescott had his third concurrent college presidency, holding this one for two years. E. A. Sutherland, who had worked at Battle Creek College and understood the educational plan envisioned, was principal and carried most of the duties.

—Preaching

Prescott was felt by many to be our best speaker. He preached often on the righteousness of Christ at the Tabernacle, which was always crowded when he spoke. He presented series of talks at the 1891, 1893, 1895 GC sessions (see "GC Session Presentations" on page 5), and conducted as well an evangelistic series for several months in Battle Creek in late 1892.

—Learning from Life's Mistakes

In 1892 and 1893 Prescott along with Jones and others endorsed Anna Phillips as a new messenger of God. When Ellen White rebuked them as being misled, they were humbled and readily accepted the correction. Their enemies however seized the opportunity to discredit them. Though Sister White said she had more confidence in them after the episode than before, for years their foes continued to recall this mistake. Her most telling rebukes were to those who continued to oppose the light of righteousness by faith, looking for the messengers to stumble as an excuse to reject their message. (*1888 Materials*, pp. 1240, 1241)

Ellen White wrote Prescott on April 16, 1894 these words of warning regarding Anna Phillips: "The Word of God is your counselor; the Word of God is your authority. Be very careful how you bring anything weaker to take its place.... Satan would like nothing better than to call minds away from the Word, to look for and expect something outside of the Word to make them feel. They should not have their attention called to dreams and visions." (Letter 68, 1894, in 14MR 184-188)

—Toward Educational Reform

Prescott's views on education, while influenced by his own training and the current trends in the country, were most significantly molded by his interaction with Ellen White. Both through reading her writings and dialoguing with her over the years on the practical issues of applying gospel principles to education, he came under deep convictions regarding the need to make changes to accomplish our schools' purpose.

He compiled and edited Ellen White's writings on education, publishing in 1893 the book *Christian Education* and in 1897 *Special Testimonies on Education.* The central position of the Bible in education became a main theme of his. The need for a balanced education that symmetrically developed body, mind, and soul, was another deep burden. The constant challenge was how to apply these valid principles in practical settings. He was willing to experiment to achieve the goal, but often students, parents, constituency, and his own teachers were not as willing.

Report on the Bible in Education at Battle Creek College

At the January 1893 GC Session Prescott reported that the Harbor Springs meeting "marked a remarkable change in the history of our educational work. Our minds were impressed there as never before with the idea that the purpose of educational work was to teach us of God in his revealed word and his works, and in his dealings with men, that all education should be planned upon such a basis and carried out in such a way that the result would be a more intimate knowledge of God, not merely as a theory but as an experience."

He further observed, "...The Bible should be studied as the gospel of Christ from first to last; and in which it should be made to appear that all the doctrines held by Seventh-day Adventists were simply the gospel of Christ rightly understood, and that the basis was the proper understanding of the whole Scriptures, and not merely a limited study of a few portions of the Scriptures.... It has not been the purpose to put in the back-ground those doctrines which distinguish us, but to make it appear that these are simply the doctrines of the Bible as a whole; that the third angel's message is simply the gospel, and that the message properly understood is an understanding of all the Scriptures, and that all of our doctrines have their basis in a proper knowledge of the gospel, and grown out of a belief in Jesus Christ as a living personal Saviour." (*GC Bulletin*, 1893, p. 350).

During the 1893 academic year, he received letters from Ellen White regarding the schools of the prophets. He was led to study the Old Testament and became convinced of need to pursue the reforms that the Harbor Springs Convention decisions had envisioned (see "Report" on page 6), and which the testimonies had repeatedly called for. He enlisted his trustees, and along with them, met with the faculty, and then the students. His plan was to replace the classics in the curriculum with Bible classes, E. J. Waggoner heading the Bible department. The only thing he succeeded in doing was adding Bible subjects. At the 1894 convention, with Jones' playing a prominent role, he worked to convince the attending principals and Bible teachers of the needed reforms. Stiff resistence continued. He used his presentations at the 1895 GC session (February 12 and onward) to promote the changes. He succeeded in having resolutions passed in support, but they did not translate into changes in the schools. Even with his being gone to Australia in the following years, the needed changes were promoted by the board, with the faculty resisting.

Ellen White at the Armadale Campmeeting

"God has given brother Prescott a special message for the people. The truth comes forth from human lips in the demonstration of the Spirit and power. I know that since coming to this place he has had the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, his lips have been touched with a coal from off the altar." (October 19, 1895; Letter w-82, 1895 to Son Edson, unreleased).

See *Lest We Forget*, Vol. 10, Nos. 3 & 4 for more information on and extracts from the Armadale talks.

—Trip to Australia and South Africa

He went to Australia in 1895 to assist in setting up the Avondale school. He served as chairman of the board, planning curriculum and buildings. He and Ellen White had long talks about the practical application of the principles outlined in her testimonies. These discussions helped both to clarify their understandings.

He also preached in evangelistic outreaches in each of the five eastern colonies. The Armadale Campmeeting soon after his arrival is perhaps the prime example of his effective preaching of Christ. (See inset.)

He helped in writing and editing of tracts and pamphlets used in evangelism, and even gave Ellen White assistance with her work on *The Desire of Ages*. On his voyage to Australia he studied the gospel of John in depth, preparing Sabbath School lessons for the church. After arriving, he bought in a Sydney book store Neander's *Lectures on the History of Christian Dogmas*, and carefully read the parts dealing with the church's struggles over the nature of Christ. These studies proved a helpful background for his preaching of the full, eternal divinity of Christ and his assistance with Ellen White in her passages in *The Desire of Ages* regarding the place of Christ in the Godhead.

Prescott then traveled west to South Africa, where S. N. Haskell was working. Like in Australia, he did evangelism and planned with educators. He conducted an evangelistic series in Capetown in conjunction with a Bible Institute which lasted three months. By Christmas of 1896 he had returned to Michigan.

Battle Creek College was still in conflict over the educational reforms. The board of the college still supported it, and requested Prescott to plan a strategy to implement further changes. They liked his plans and wished he would become president again, an idea he did not enjoy. The 1897 GC session at Union College, which elected G. A. Irwin as GC president, voted to send Prescott to Great Britain to head the work there. The Battle Creek College stockholders meeting, after the GC session, brought E. A. Sutherland from Walla Walla as the new president of Battle Creek College. He was to implement the educational reform principles in Battle Creek successfully followed in Washington state.

Work in England, 1897-1901

In England, Prescott worked hard in evangelism and publishing, but found church growth to be slow. He conducted a general church meeting the summer of 1898 during which the British Conference was organized. He worked with the Drs. Kress to develop a health ministry, which included plans for a sanitarium, food factory, and health magazine. Fire destroyed the facility planned for the first two. The Kresses' return to America, due to health problems, doomed the third. He attempted

to start a training school, but was unable to do more than have the constituency vote in his last conference meeting to begin the project, which did not happen until after his return to the USA.

Prescott was also made board chairman of the International Tract Society Limited, the church's publishing ministry in Great Britain. However, its affairs were in such disorder, and the factors involved so difficult to resolve, that he eventually resigned. The conflict which was related to the business quagmire involved W. C. White who was managing the Echo Publishing Company in Australia, straining their relationship. The problems enabled Prescott to understand how the current structure of the church prevented local fields from handling efficiently their own matters. He voiced these concern at the 1899 GC Session, but effective change would have to await the 1901 Session.

While in England Prescott lived next to E. J. Waggoner. They worked together and shared ideas on the gospel, health, and prophecy, including "the daily" of Daniel. During their four years together, they apparently developed what Ellen White identified at the 1901 GC Session as "overdrawn expressions" and "false theories" in regards to sanctification. (See Letter 269, 1903, pp. 1, 2. Dec. 14, 1903, in 10MR356, 357).

Next Issue: Prescott, 1901-1944

Lest We Forget

Volume 10 Number 1

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: Fred Bischoff, Gary Foster, Ray and Frances Foster, Marlene Steinweg

LOGO: Donna Wical

RESEARCH & LAYOUT: Fred Bischoff

EDITORIAL ASSISTANCE: Perri Bischoff

Copyright © 2001

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

One Year (4 issues) US$10 in N. America

Overseas: US$15

Three Years (12 issues)US$25 in N. America

Overseas: US$40

Back Issues: Inquire at addresses given

Adventist Pioneer Library

- Repeating the words of the pioneers through periodicals, books, and CD-ROM
- A service of Health Ministry Foundation, Inc., a California Nonprofit Corporation, Member of A.S.I (Adventist-Laymen's Services and Industries)
- Visit APL on the web at www.tagnet.org/apl
- E-mail: apl@netbox.com

Health Ministry Foundation Inc

Adventist Pioneer Library

P O Box 383

Loma Linda CA 92354-0383

Address Service Requested

Nonprofit
US POSTAGE PAID
Loma Linda, CA
Permit No. 12

VOLUME 10 *SECOND QUARTER 2000* NUMBER 2

ADVENTIST PIONEER LIBRARY

Lest We Forget

"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history." LS196

W. W. Prescott

Part 2, 1901-1944

Secretary of the Foreign Mission Board, 1901-1903

W. W. Prescott returned from England to attend the GC Session in Battle Creek the spring of 1901. The session appointed him Secretary of the Foreign Mission Board, dealing with both home and foreign missions. In this position, he was actually A. G. Daniell's associate. The board sent out 183 missionaries during the two years Prescott was chairman.

W. W. Prescott
Courtesy EGW Estate

Education Work, 1901-1902

The 1901 GC Session voted to move Battle Creek College. E. A. Sutherland was the college president with P. T. Magan assisting him. Prescott assisted with the closing ceremony of the old college in May, a summer school at the new location in Berrien Springs for teachers in June, and later the same year became first a trustee of the new school and then its chairman of the board. He became alienated from the school administration over the issue of E. J. Waggoner's call to teach at the new school. Ellen White wrote to Prescott, encouraging support for the new College. She endorsed Sutherland and Magan as "close Bible students" who were achieving success because of their sense of dependence. (6/30/1902, Letter 102;15MR 118-123)

A week later Sister White wrote urging Prescott, "Let the Berrien Springs school be carried on by those who are now acquainted with it.... Brother Prescott, your place is not to be confined in any school as a manager or a teacher. Your testimony is greatly needed in our large gatherings and important meetings.... The Lord has a message for you to give to His people in regard to the preparation that must be made for the coming of the Lord…." (7/7/1902, Letter 100; 10MR352, 535)

In November of 1902 Prescott resigned from the Board of EMC. His involvement with education over the next 19 years was limited to participating in the education conventions of 1903 and 1906, being a charter member of the new college in Takoma Park, Maryland, and teaching some classes there.

Vice President of the General Conference, 1902-1905

In 1902 the GC Committee named Prescott the church's first vice-president. He served as vice-president until 1905 when he resigned to focus on the publishing work.

During his administrative term, he received counsel from Ellen White regarding specific and general needs of

continued on page 3

Wondrous Power in the Beginning of this Movement, the Minneapolis Message, and the Remedy of Repentance (Excerpt from April 15, 1901 Sermon at GC Session)

...I want to ask every soul here who has known something of the history of this work, to think a little. Every one who knows the beginning of this movement knows that there was wondrous power in it, not because they had all the truth which God proposed to reveal to his people before he became visible in the clouds of heaven, but because they walked in all the light he gave them, rejecting nothing he sent them. Therefore he gave the witness to their message; and souls were converted, not by the power of eloquence, but by the power of the Spirit of God.

Some are here who remember the time when a mere hymn sung in the Spirit would bring the whole audience to tears, because God's melting Spirit was there witnessing. Do not the hearts of some long for the ring of those days? That time and experience will not come back by turning backward, and going back to see how much light they had. That experience will come by facing toward him who is the Light, and opening the windows of the soul toward heaven, closing them toward earth, and stopping this listening to man and putting the commandments of man in the place of the commandments of God. The message that we have given, we want to take to ourselves. We have given away the message until we have lost it.

I appeal to you. After that movement, and the Lord did not come, new light broke in—light upon the full truth of what it meant to keep the commandments of God. The Sabbath truth and the sanctuary truth came forward at the same time, because they were inseparable. The reform marched forward with power. But there are many in this audience who can remember when the pendulum began to swing back, and can also remember when, thirteen years ago at Minneapolis, God sent a message to this people to deliver them out of that experience.

What has been the history of this people and this work since that time? Where do we stand now with reference to this message? How far has that truth been received—not simply assented to, but actually received?—Not far, I tell you. How far has the ministry of this denomination been baptized into that Spirit?—Not far, I tell you. For the past thirteen years this light has been rejected and turned against by many, and they are rejecting it and turning from it to-day; and I say to every such one, "Beware lest that come upon you which was spoken of the prophets, Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish."

1901 GC Session Presentations

Bible Study (God's Message)
Our Time and Its Meaning
Saved To Serve
Sermon (Justification By Faith)
Sermon (Parallel of Babylonian Captivity to now)
Talk On Consecration
The Work In England

What is the remedy?—The very same as of old, and no other,—repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. When John the Baptist came to prepare the way of the Lord under those circumstances that I have set forth, what was his message? "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." When Christ himself appeared, and began his work, what did he say? —"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." When he sent out his disciples, the apostles, in his stead, to carry on his work after he ascended, what did they preach?—"Repent ye therefore, and be converted." What are the messages to the churches?—Repent, repent, repent. What is the message to the Laodicean church?—"Be zealous therefore and repent."

I have not seen and do not see now in this Conference, that real response to the message that God has sent to us, that will be of any effective result in his work. I am willing to face the fact, but it is a fact. I say that there ought to come upon us, ministers of the word of Jesus Christ, such a spirit of repentance as many of us have not known for many years. There ought to be a work wrought at this Conference that we have seen no signs of yet. I have prayed and prayed, that God would work it; and he is the only one who can work it. I say to my brethren in the ministry, as well as to others, If we go away from this Conference, this crisis in God's work, this time when we, God's people, stand for the third and the last time facing that very experience that we have studied in the scripture—if we go away from this Conference without a decided and most marked change coming over us different from what we have had,—may God pity his people and work! (*1901 GC Bulletin*, p. 321; compare 8T97, 98, 104-106) ♦

continued from page 1

the church. Her burden for the spiritual condition of the church can be seen in the following example: "I am deeply moved by the unprepared condition of our churches.... The signs of the times are fulfilling in our world, yet the churches generally are represented as slumbering." (7/30/1903, Letter 161, 15MR228, 229)

Review & Herald Publishing, 1901-1909

By the end of the 1800's ungodly conditions prevailed in the R&H Publishing House. Ellen White and Prescott worked for change in the 1890's. Daniells continued the attempt when he became GC president in 1901, having Prescott elected to the R&H board, and pushing to stop commercial work and to have the GC take over ownership from the association. Surprisingly, the long-time *Review* editor Uriah Smith resisted these moves, publicly opposing them in an editorial January 1902. Smith caused further problems by shortly publishing articles opposing the Minneapolis message regarding the law in Galatians, in spite of Ellen White's letter to him regarding this in 1896 (Letter 96, 1896, written June 6, 1896; in 1SM 234-235).

At a meeting on February 15, 1902, the GC Committee voted to appoint Prescott as editor of the *Review*. The decision troubled Prescott, and severely affected Smith, who suffered a stroke the night of the meeting, and never fully regained his health, dying in March 1903.

Immediately upon becoming editor, Prescott used the *Review* to promote "The Forward Movement" of health reform. He began a nine-month series on the mediatorial work of Christ. He wrote Daniells on 4/10/1902 that his burden as editor was to teach the church "what our gospel message really is." He stressed the unity of health and gospel. Before the end of the year, he openly began to warn of Kellogg's views. He emphasized as well the distinctive teaching of our church, religious liberty, and missions, and included source materials in the *Review* for our ministers.

Prescott's attempts to reform the Publishing House conditions in 1902 did not accomplish what he wanted. Employee morale declined, and vandalism increased, leading the board to increase fire insurance coverage. On December 30, 1902 the plant was destroyed by fire. Prescott found a temporary location for his office and temporary printers to print the *Review*. He also had the duty to read the letters from Ellen White to others that indicated that the fires were judgments of God.

At the encouragement of Ellen White, the GC Session in Oakland in March, 1905, voted to move the GC offices to the Washington, DC area. They also voted a recommendation to the R&H Publishing Association to move the publishing work out of Battle Creek. Prescott became president of the newly formed R&H Publishing Association, and responsible for the move.

By July property was purchased in Takoma Park and Washington, D.C. A plethora of legal and organizational obstacles made the transition difficult and drawn out. But by May 31, 1906 the periodical was issued from the new location. Prescott worked to reach a high standard in the publishing work, from the employees chosen and trained, to the printed material itself.

Kellogg, 1902-1907

Prescott's involvement with the conflicts involving Dr. John Harvey Kellogg paralleled closely his years as *Review* editor. In January, 1902 the Sanitarium in Battle Creek had burned down. The GC Committee approved using the sale of Dr. Kellogg's upcoming book for fund-raising to replace the San. This book, *The Living Temple*, was planned from a collection of health studies commissioned for a church-wide health emphasis. However, Prescott detected pantheism in the manuscript. In the December 2, 1902 issue of the *Review*, he began to address the Kellogg danger of "substituting a human conception of the presence of God for the reality of his presence in Christ through the Holy Spirit." Over the next five years more than 100 of his editorials dealt with Kellogg's concepts.

Prescott wrote to Dr. Kellogg on 10/28/03, specifying the errors he detected. He stated the doctor's teaching:

1. gave "a wrong view of God and his dwelling place"
2. "set aside any need of atonement and the work of Christ as our High Priest in the Sanctuary above"
3. led to "a breaking down of the distinction between the sinner and the Christian by teaching that every man is a temple of God regardless of his faith in Christ"

At the Lake Union Conference session the spring of 1904 at Berrien Springs, multiple speakers addressed the pantheism issue, including Ellen White, W. W. Prescott, A. T. Jones, and J. H. Kellogg. Ellen White's first address Wednesday, May 18 dealt with pantheism. (See MS 46, 1904, found in 1SAT 340-348; 5Bio331.)

In the midst of these meetings Ellen White wrote an impressive letter to Prescott and Daniells stating, "Now is our time to save Dr. Kellogg." She described seeing Christ personally working to reclaim Dr. Kellogg, and added, "Work with all diligence in harmony with Christ. We have not a moment to spend in contention." (5/20/1904, Letter 165, 1904 in SpTB #2 pp. 30-35)

It appears that the core of the confusion was over the nature of God. Prescott parted with Waggoner on the issue, writing to him 11/14/04, "I did not have the least idea that in your teaching about the revelation of God in nature you intended to set forth the same things as are set forth in that book [*The Living Temple*]. When therefore both you and Bro. Jones sided with Dr. Kellogg in the controversy over that teaching and openly sustained the book, I was terribly shaken up." "I certainly did not include such interpretations of scripture and such view of God in my teaching."

We must remember that none of those who are in the depth of Satan's snares know that they are there.

Ellen White wrote more caution and counsel in late 1905 to Prescott regarding the matter. "...Let us hold on patiently for a little while, and let the elements break forth that are struggling into life. Let not too many articles be published in the *Review and Herald* that are of a character to stir up strife. ... The course of false science led the Jews to strong unbelief. We are filled with grief when we meet the same unbelief in the world today.... Some who have been deceived by men in responsible positions will repent.... And in all our dealings with them, we must remember that none of those who are in the depth of Satan's snares know that they are there. (10/30/1905, Letter 311; in BCL 122-128)

Kellogg attempted to revise *The Living Temple*, even trying to enlist Prescott's help, who found the book impossible to correct. Much party strife ensued as the schism deepened.

Health Problems and Trip Overseas, 1906-07

Overwork led Prescott to near collapse, and a trip starting in 1906 to Asia was arranged with the hope that the voyages would bring recuperation of his energies. He met with workers and assessed the need of the church over a five-month period covering fields from China to India, returning through Europe with meetings there. He reported on his activities and observations in 21 editorials in the *Review* (Jan. 24 to Jul. 25, 1907).

"The Daily" Controversy, 1907-1909

The source of the church's view of "the daily" in the book of Daniel ("the daily" being Roman paganism) dated to William Miller's interpretation. Joseph Bates, James White, J. N. Andrews, and Uriah Smith all adopted this view. Ellen White in 1850 (EW74,75) said the pioneers had "the correct view of the 'daily'."

In Adventism the "new view" ("the daily" being the mediatorial ministry of Christ, the view of most Christian interpreters in the centuries prior to the Advent movement) dated at least to Conradi's book on prophecy published in German, and to Prescott's discussions with fellow workers in England in 1899. E. E. Andross, who was also in England, did not agree. Prescott felt the new view was a valuable, Christ-centered interpretation, and better fit the context of Daniel.

January 26, 1908 a meeting on the issue was held in Ellen White's office at Elmshaven, with Haskell and wife, Loughborough, C. C. Criser, W. C. White, D. E. Robinson, Daniells, and Prescott. The meeting did not result in a meeting of minds, though from the trip Prescott felt he had a green light to proceed to write about his view in the *Review*. He planned a whole series on Daniel, which began May 14 but due to continued controversy, were stopped in August.

Ellen White wrote Prescott with cautions on June 24, 1908 (Letter 224, 1908; in 6Bio248, 249), and a week later she wrote again stating, "There have been different opinions regarding the 'daily,' and there will continue to be. If the Lord has seen fit to let this matter rest for so many years without correcting the same, would it not be wisdom on your part to refrain from presenting your views concerning it?" (Letter 226, 1908; in 6Bio 249; entire letter in 12MR 223-226; through an apparent oversight, these letters were not sent to Prescott until August of 1910.) She did not sense the timing was

right to push the matter.

The issue invaded the GC Session May 13 to June 6, 1909 with the discussions being combative and personal. After the session, Ellen White met with the GC Committee and appealed that Prescott be freed to do evangelism. It was with reluctance and some consternation that they released him.

In the middle of 1910 Ellen White wrote a general letter to those involved with the controversy. Four times she repeated her request "that my writings shall not be used as the leading argument to settle questions over which there is now controversy." She stated, "It has been presented to me that this is not a subject of vital importance." She again appealed for work for the cities. (Ms11, 1910, written July 31; found in PH020 5-10; portions in 1SM164-166). Three days later she wrote a letter voicing similar concerns, addressing "Brethren Butler, Loughborough, Haskell, Smith, Gilbert, Daniells, Prescott, and all who have been active in urging their views in regard to the meaning of the 'daily' of Daniel 8." (Letter 62, 1910; in 6Bio649; 1SM168)

Evangelism, Publishing, and Religious Liberty, 1909-1915

At W. C. White's invitation Prescott contributed in 1910 a list of 105 changes to the book *The Great Controversy*. Others had recommended changes as well. Many of these were included in the January, 1911 revision of this book. However, such work was not without controversy, as some saw it as unbelief in the work of Ellen White, and an attempt to change the church's beliefs.

During this time the church found opportunity to revise and refine, with Prescott's significant contribution, other prominent books such as *Daniel and Revelation* and *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*. Prescott's long-standing opponents, such as J. S. Washburn, G. B. Starr, F. C. Gilbert, and S. N. Haskell continued their personal attacks on him, and used the revision to accuse him of being unreliable.

His work assisting the preparation of Ellen White's books helped him to see how her gift functioned in this area of her ministry, and made it clear to him that many in the church had mistaken views in regard to this. He, along with W. A. Spicer, encouraged W. C. White to clarify how her prophetic role functioned. White attempted in the 1913 GC Session to do so, but was misunderstood, and pulled back.

Regarding Prescott's call to do evangelism, it has been observed, "It was not easy to enter into city evangelism when he had never held an evangelistic effort per se. He much preferred a scholarly search for theological truth to active evangelism." (Howard B. Weeks, *Adventist Evangelism*, p. 29). "But in February, 1910, he began public meetings in New York City, and worked in a modest way." (6Bio222). He conducted a series of public meetings in Washington, D.C., on Sabbath and religious liberty, and an evangelistic series in Battle Creek. He had to cancel plans for an evangelistic series in New York for the early summer of 1911 due to his wife's illness during the preparation time.

Prescott's wife, Sarah, had been diagnosed with cancer in 1908, with several surgeries, recoveries, and relapses following. Prescott took time to nurse her, as well as do his editorial work. She died June 10, 1910 at the age of 54. Her death devastated him, and he left for a 6-week break to his brother's home in Maine. In September he was sent to India to attend church business, in the hopes the voyage would help his health.

He still tried to find a way to carry out Ellen White's instructions to do evangelism, but was thwarted from full involvement. For example, he was planning evangelistic and chaplain work in Boston the summer of 1911, but pneumonia in the spring brought him low again. He spent 3 months at his brother's place again in Maine, with his 18 year old son Lewis. Later that year, Lewis left to study engineering at MIT. November 27 Prescott married again, to Daisy Orndorf, a woman 24 years younger than he. She was the nurse who had lived with the Prescott's, providing care for Sarah during her final illness. During this period, his aged parents lived with him at his residence in Takoma Park.

—Religious Liberty

In the first decade of the 1900's, the Roman Catholic Church was making major advances in the public arena in America. In 1908 Rome decreed the USA a Roman Catholic Christian nation. Prescott had leading editorial duties in the *Liberty* journal begun in 1906. However, Prescott pushed for another journal more focused than *Liberty* on the Catholic threat. The R&H board approved *The Protestant Magazine* in January, 1909.

Prescott vigorously attacked Catholic doctrine and

practice, outlining the history of the papacy, and contrasting Bible truth with its teachings. The scholarly magazine was seen as one of the best, if not the best, defenders of the Protestant and American way of life. The magazine and its editor received national attention, with Prescott conducting public meetings that drew large crowds interested in the issues that the increasing power of Catholics in America stirred up.

However, the magazine struggled to become self-supporting, and was openly opposed by those who disagreed with Prescott on "the daily." The start of World War I in 1914, with greater tensions in Protestant and Catholic relations, including riots and murders, led the church to pull back from any risk of agitating a crisis situation. Prescott was assigned to other job responsibilities in October, 1915, and the magazine was stopped shortly thereafter.

One positive result of the agitation fulfilled a special burden Prescott had. This was for the church to document more accurately its claims about the papacy and its relation to Bible prophecy, as well as to identify erroneous statements against it. This project resulted in the *Source Book for Bible Students* in 1919.

The year 1915 was a transitional year for Prescott. In addition to Ellen White's death, his father J. L. Prescott died, one of the last living pioneers who had witnessed the signs and the passing of the time. In the spring of that year his letter to W. C. White reflected some of his inner conflict between his conscience and his church affiliation: "After giving the best of my life to this movement, I have little peace and satisfaction in connection with it and am driven to the conclusion that the only thing for me to do is to do quietly what I can do conscientiously and leave the others to go on without me." He felt that erroneous concepts about Ellen White's ministry were behind the opposition against him. "The way your mother's writings have been handled and the false impression concerning them which is still fostered" resulted in his "great trial and perplexity."

General Conference Field Secretary, 1915 Onward

Prescott had been the first GC vice president, and in 1915 he was appointed the first field secretary. He was sent immediately to South America to oversee its organization into a Division of the world church.

Prescott continued writing and editorial work. He composed a list of suggestions of how to present the Bible truths the church understood in a way that made Christ the center. He sent the list to Frederick Griggs, GC Education Secretary, who forwarded them to the college Bible departments. Prescott began to develop a textbook for our colleges entitled *The Doctrine of Christ.*

September 1917 he and his wife left for an extended trip to China, to attend union conference sessions and to conduct workers' institutes, speaking hundreds of times. While there word arrived that his only son was missing April 18, 1918, in action on the battlefields in Europe. His loss was compounded by the fact that Lewis had left Adventism in his late teens.

Prescott returned to the USA in 1919 and participated in several conventions, as well as serving as planning committee chairman for a major Bible conference in July. This significant meeting had 65 attendees. Prescott was the main speaker, giving over 23 presentations focusing on bringing Christ to the center of the Adventist message, a perspective he acquired out of

Timeline: 1901-Death

1901	EMC Board (to 1902)
	Secretary Foreign Mission Board (to 1903)
	Review & Herald Board
1902	Vice President GC
	Review & Herald Editor
	Began exposing Kellogg's ideas on pantheism
	R&H Pub. House burned
1906	New R&H Publishing House in Takoma Park
	Trip to China, India, Europe
1908	Meeting at Elmshaven on "the daily"; much conflict
1909	Began *The Protestant Magazine* (to 1915)
	Prescott released from R&H to do evangelism
1910	Wife Sarah died
	Trip to India
1911	Married Daisy Orndorf
1915	General Conference Field Secretary; trip to S. America
1917	Trip to China
1918	Son Lewis Lost in WWI
1919	Major Bible Conference
	Source Book for Bible Students
1921	Avondale and Australia
1924	Union College
1932	EMC Theology Department
1933	*The Spade Confirms the Book*
1944	Died Washington Sanitarium

the Minneapolis experience. His teaching blended with powerful preaching, and the delegates voted appreciation for him at the end of the meetings. Out of the meeting came also a recommendation that he publish his material, which he quickly did in two volumes.

His points regarding prophecy was that it (1) is Christ centered; (2) must be interpreted within the context of the prophetic passage; and (3) can have multiple fulfillments. His was more than a theoretical presentation. The transcript of the conference records his saying, "The preaching of the Gospel is not to persuade people to agree with me in my theological views. The preaching of the gospel, so far as I am concerned, is to bring people into personal association with that Person with whom I have fellowship."

Educational and Editorial Work, 1921 Onward

—Avondale and Australia, 1921-1923

Prescott was called back to Australia in 1921 to help build up the floundering program at Avondale. He persuaded the board to bring Lynn H. Wood to continue the work of carrying out the instructions given Ellen White on education. He traveled the breadth of the Union holding ministerial institutes and speaking at campmeetings.

—Union College, 1924-1928

Prescott was brought to help save Union College in 1924, and succeeded in turning the school around. He remained as a teacher for two more years, as chairman of the theology department. During this time he wrote *The Saviour of the World.* As well, he pioneered an hour-long religious radio broadcast on KFAN in Lincoln.

His qualities of orderliness, refinement, dignity, and academic excellence, combined with a thorough knowledge of Scripture, inspired and challenged students to excellence. To some he was stern, unapproachable, and aloof. Others found beneath the surface a gentleman who was hospitable, kind, and gracious.

—Writing

Prescott wrote a series of articles on the history of the Bible in the *Signs* at the invitation of A. O. Tait who was attempting to counter the position of B. G. Wilkinson, professor at Washington Missionary College. Wilkinson had attacked the American Revised Version in public lectures, as well as in his classes at the college. Wilkinson responded with a document *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*. Some felt Wilkinson was stating that the KJV was the only inspired version of the Bible in English. Prescott wrote a review of the book, feeling it was quite inaccurate, but the church chose two men, L. E. Froom and W. E. Howell, to write a formal review, which recommended the book not be circulated. Wilkinson defended his position, but the officers reaffirmed their request. The book continued to circulate, and the controversy only slowly subsided.

The GC leaders requested Prescott to do a book on the Bible and archaeology. In 1933 *The Spade Confirms the Book* was published by Fleming H. Revell.

—Emmanuel Missionary College, 1932-1934

Prescott joined EMC in 1932 as head of its theology department, with his Dartmouth masters degree helping the school to maintain its threatened accreditation. At 77, he enjoyed teaching and associating with young people.

The preaching of the gospel is not to persuade people to agree with me [but] to bring people into personal association with that Person with whom I have fellowship.

Theological controversy continued in the church in the 1930s. The new generation of GC leaders contained some who had reservations about Prescott. In 1934 the GC officers asked Prescott to resign from EMC, questioning his harmony with the church's doctrine of the sanctuary.

This request apparently resulted from Prescott's comments to some of the officers that Ballanger and Fletcher had not been adequately answered, and from his lack of a blanket condemnation of Conradi. Prescott felt many attempts to answer these controversies reverted to pre-Minneapolis views.

The manner in which the leaders had requested his resignation (without dialoging with him beforehand) led to much difficulty and misunderstanding. In the end, Prescott resigned and could not be persuaded by the EMC board to remain even teaching part time. He returned to Washington, but did not participate in the GC committees until the officers in September formally withdrew their letter requesting his resignation from EMC, apologized, and asked forgiveness.

—More Writing, Dialoguing and Preaching

Prescott assisted L. E. Froom, editor of *The Ministry* magazine, with research and writing. He was a resource person for other church writers.

The last years of his life involved writing (much of which was not published), preaching his Christ-centered sermons in various campmeetings and churches, recalling his early days in the work with the SDA pioneers, and critiquing church literature that he felt was in error. After his office work and public speaking ended, he continued to write articles for church papers, work in his library and flower garden, visit with old and young friends, including teachers from the nearby seminary.

His views that the church had been raised up for a special mission, and that it must grow in its understanding of truth put him at odds with the questioners that became disloyal to the church, as well as those in the church who refused to consider the need for learning something new. He felt the church did not properly respond to valid criticisms, but instead attempted merely to show its detractors wrong. Controversy continued to follow him.

Surgery in 1939 made him an invalid, with activities significantly restricted. He was able to have visitors and to visit his neighbors some. Influenza in December of 1943 progressed to pneumonia, and he died January 21, 1944 at the Washington Sanitarium.

Next two issues: Prescott's 1895 Armadale Sermons.

Lest We Forget

Volume 10 Number 3

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: Fred Bischoff, Gary Foster, Ray and Frances Foster, Marlene Steinweg

LOGO: Donna Wical

RESEARCH & LAYOUT: Fred Bischoff

Copyright © 2001

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

One Year (4 issues) US$10 in N. America

Overseas: US$15

Three Years (12 issues)US$25 in N. America

Overseas: US$40

Back Issues: Inquire at addresses given

Adventist Pioneer Library

- Repeating the words of the pioneers through periodicals, books, and CD-ROM
- A service of Health Ministry Foundation, Inc., a California Nonprofit Corporation, Member of A.S.I (Adventist-Laymen's Services and Industries)
- Visit APL on the web at www.tagnet.org/apl
- E-mail: apl@netbox.com

Health Ministry Foundation Inc

Adventist Pioneer Library

P O Box 383

Loma Linda CA 92354-0383

Address Service Requested

Nonprofit
US POSTAGE PAID
Loma Linda, CA
Permit No. 12

VOLUME 10 THIRD QUARTER 2000 NUMBER 3

ADVENTIST PIONEER LIBRARY

Lest We Forget

"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history." LS196

The W. W. Prescott Armadale Sermons— "Manifest Demonstration of the Spirit"

In this issue and the next we highlight a little known episode in the ministry of W. W. Prescott, his sermons at Armadale, Melbourne, Australia, in October and November of 1895. As we attempt to document, Ellen White made profound observations regarding these presentations.

She had already stated in a letter to S. N. Haskell June 1, 1894 that "Bro. Jones and Prescott are the Lord's chosen messengers, beloved of God." (*EGW 1888 Materials*, p. 1241). The next year she wrote to J. E. White, "Those who, since the Minneapolis meeting, have had the privilege of listening to the words spoken by the messengers of God, Elder A.T. Jones, Prof. Prescott, Brn. E. J. Waggoner, O. A. Olsen, and many others, at the campmeetings and ministerial institutes, have had the invitation, 'Come, for all things are now ready. Come to the supper prepared for you.' Light, heaven's light, has been shining. The trumpet has given a certain sound" (*EGW 1888 Materials*, p. 1455).

While Ellen White endorsed God's message at that time through several messengers, the bulk of her statements deal with A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner (see LWF, Vol. 9, No. 1-3). However, this Armadale experience involving W. W. Prescott appears to be unique in the totality of the following observations:

1. Ellen White as the lifetime messenger of God was present in person to hear the sermons.
2. She powerfully confirmed the presence of the Holy Spirit in the messages.
3. Her secretary took the sermons down in shorthand.
4. At least eight of the sermons were published.

We trust you will be blessed by how God has led in our past, and come to see the vital importance of the concepts and experience to which Brother Prescott pointed his hearers some 105 years ago. We encourage you to obtain all 8 sermons published together as noted on page 8.

Brief historical background to the Armadale meetings 2
Ellen White's observations regarding the meetings and Prescott's presentations 2
The Law in Christ; or, The Relation Between the Law and the Gospel 6
Published Armadale sermons 6

Historical Background

In his biography of William Warren Prescott, *The Shaping of Adventism*, Gilbert M. Valentine records the following background to Prescott's evangelistic approach:

> Events following Minneapolis had led him into a new religious experience that centered on "personal relationship with Christ" As a result, he now saw the doctrines of the church from a different perspective. As he explained years later to delegates at the 1919 Bible Conference, the change had come to him "almost like a personal revelation, like a person speaking to me." When he first "started out" in the work, he thought "the thing to do was to prove the doctrines…. As I had observed and heard," he went on, the preacher's task is "simply to demonstrate the truthfulness" of church teachings. Since his "new vision," however, he had "cast the whole thing aside and started in the simplest way presenting Christ." Church doctrines, he now believed, should be presented as "simply the gospel of Christ rightly understood." They should "grow out of a belief in Jesus Christ as a living personal Saviour."
>
> This was not some artificial additive or some sugar coating that Prescott thought was necessary to give Adventists a gospel flavor. Rather, it was a genuine, total reorientation of his belief structure. It set the pattern for the rest of his ministry. To bring other Adventist preachers to the same conviction became his life-long burden. "That ye might know Him whom to know is life eternal," became his hallmark text of Scripture. According to H. M. S. Richards, who attended some of the professor's later ministerial institutes, Prescott's "legacy to Adventist preachers" was that "Christ must be the center of every sermon." (HMSR to GMV, May 21, 1981). Australia in the 1890's was still largely untouched by the Gospel message of 1888. Prescott's message stirred not only the minds but the hearts of the people.

Valentine describes the response of both W. C. White and Ellen White:

> Several weeks after the presentation on the Sabbath doctrine the seasoned but awed W. C. White was still marvelling. Prescott had preached "with a clearness and power that exceeds anything I have ever heard in my life," he reported. The truth had been presented "with a freshness and a brightness" never seen in it before. He recalled that he had not even once heard Prescott preach "what we are accustomed to call a doctrinal sermon" on "the old lines." "The old lines of work" of getting up an "interest" by "presenting the prophecies" must "be abandoned," he asserted. "The whole thing" must receive "a new setting." He longed to see "every one" of the ministers emulate Prescott in "preaching Christ and him crucified."
>
> Ellen White, too, was ecstatic over Prescott's sermons and the quality of the people who were drawn by his "exaltation of Jesus." They were "the very best class" of society. "Unbelievers turn pale and say, that man is inspired," she reported to her son Edson. She saw in this Christ-centered evangelism a pattern for the whole church. Testimonies went out encouraging others to follow the professor's example. (pp. 87-89).

Ellen White's Observations

Ellen White's comments are so significant about Prescott's Armadale presentations, that we share here her descriptions at some length.

A. October 19, 1895 (Letter w-82, 1895 to son Edson, unreleased)

In the evening Prof. Prescott gave a most powerful discourse, instruction precious as gold. The tent was full, and many were standing outside. All seemed to be fascinated with the Word of God as the speaker presented the truth in new lines, separating the truth from the companionship of error, and by the divine influence of the Spirit of God making it to shine like precious jewels….

God has given brother Prescott a special message for the people. The truth comes forth from human lips in the demonstration of the Spirit and power…. We are hoping and praying for an outpouring of the Spirit of God upon the people. We think that the best class of people are attending the meetings. The interest awakened exceeds anything we have yet had here in camp-meetings. The great object of the speakers is to sweep away the refuge of lies, by exalting Jesus higher and yet higher. We are doing our best to lead the people to look upon the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world….

Seldom can I give myself the pleasure of listening to discourses from our ministering brethren, but Sabbath forenoon I attended the meeting and heard Prof. Prescott preach. I know that since coming to this place

he has had the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, his lips have been touched with a coal from off the altar. We know and can distinguish the voice of the shepherd. The truth has been poured forth from the lips of the servant of God as the people had never heard it before; unbelievers turn pale and say, "that man is inspired." The people do not stroll about the grounds, but go immediately into the tent and listen as if spellbound.

B. October 22, 1895 (Letter 84, 1895 to son Edson, unreleased)

The Lord has given Brother Prescott a message for the people, which is highly appreciated. His mind is fruitful in the truth, and the power and the grace of God are upon him. We feel that we are highly favored in having his services at this camp meeting. I long to attend every meeting.

C. November 6, 1895 (Letter 25, 1895 to S. N. Haskell, unreleased)

We are at this time in our camp-meeting having a feast of precious things. The word is presented in a most powerful manner. The Holy Spirit has been poured out upon Brother Prescott in a great measure…. Brother Prescott has been bearing the burning words of truth such as I have heard from some in 1844. The inspiration of the Spirit of God has been upon him. Unbelievers say, "These are the words of God. I never heard such things before."

We have had the truth presented in clear lines. Bro. Prescott has never had such power in preaching the truth as he has had since coming to this meeting. The unbelievers sit with their eyes riveted on him in amazement, as the truth comes forth from his lips, vitalized by the Spirit of God. When I consider the responsibility resting upon all who hear this heaven sent message, I tremble at the word of the Lord....

D. November 6, 1895 (MS 19, 1895, unreleased)

I have just been listening to a discourse given by Professor Prescott. It was a most powerful appeal to the people. Those not of our faith seemed deeply interested. They say, "there is no life in our churches, everything is so cold and dry; we are starving for the bread of life." The people are of the very best class of society, of all ages; noble looking men of white hair, sit and listen as for their life. Some men who are superintendents of Sunday Schools, are as eager to get the discourses as they see our reporters taking notes in shorthand. They say, "I do not want to lose one idea." All the words, they say, are precious…. All say, "never did we have the privilege of hearing the Bible made so plain and brought to that simplicity in explanation, that we can not help but understand it …."

Maggie Hare is reporting Professor Prescott's discourses and my talks, for publication. Professor Prescott's sermons will never seem the same, I fear, as when given by the living preacher: for the words are spoken in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power, his face all aglow with the sunshine of heaven…. I think I may safely say I have never in my experience seen so large a number attending meetings not of our faith who are so hungry for the truth.

E. November 7, 1895 (Letter 51, 1895 to Bro McCullagh, unreleased)

In the evening Elder Prescott preached. The tent was full, and scores, it is reported, could not get under the canvas and went away…. We have seen the power of God in human vessels as they have presented the truth at these meetings …. The Lord is in our midst.

F. November 17, 1895 (Letter 113, 1895 to J. H. Kellogg)

I have been privileged to witness the past five weeks that which has given me much joy to see a people eager, hungry, and earnest to hear the Word of God presented in clear and new light. The Word of God has been presented in demonstration of the Spirit and with power. The Lord has sent Professor Prescott to us not an empty vessel, but a vessel full of heavenly treasure that he can give to every man his portion of meat in due season. This the people of God everywhere want….

As they see Maggie Hare taking the precious truths in shorthand, they act like a flock of half-starved sheep, and they beg for a copy. They want to read and study every point presented. Souls are being taught of God. Brother Prescott has presented truth in clear and simple style, yet rich in nourishment….

We have heard many in different localities where our camp meetings have been held, express themselves as very much surprised that we do believe in Jesus Christ, that we believe in His divinity. They say, "I have been told that this people do not preach Christ, but I have never attended meetings where Christ was more manifestly taught and exalted than in the sermons and in every line of work at these meetings." How can Seventh-day Adventists preach any other doctrine?

G. November 18, 1895 (Letter 83, 1895 to Edson White)

The Lord has visited Brother Prescott in a most remarkable manner and given to him the Holy Spirit to give to this people…. Those who are not in the truth say, "That man speaks from the inspiration of the Spirit of God." We are sure that the Lord has endowed him with His Holy Spirit and the truth is being poured forth from his lips in rich currents. The truth has been listened to by preachers and by people not of our faith. After the meeting they beg of Brother Prescott to give them a copy of these discourses….

Brother Prescott has spoken many times and those not of our faith have felt deeply and expressed themselves that he was speaking under the inspiration of the Spirit of God.…

Abundant evidence has been given that the Holy Spirit of God has spoken to men through human agencies…. Large numbers testify that they have never heard the Word administered with such power and in the manifest demonstration of the Spirit as at this meeting. God has said in the heavenly courts to His heavenly intelligences, "Let there be spiritual light to shine amid the moral darkness of accumulated error and fables, and reveal truth." The Messenger of the covenant has come, as the Sun of Righteousness, to arise and shine forth upon the eager listeners. His preexistence, His coming the second time in glory and power, His personal dignity, His holy law uplifted, are the themes that have been dwelt upon with simplicity and power.

H. November 21, 1895 (RH 01-07-1896 article "The Australian Camp-Meeting")

Our third Australian camp-meeting was held in Armadale, a populous suburb of Melbourne, about three miles southeast from the center of the city....

During the meeting we have had abundant evidence that the Lord has been guiding both in the location and in the work of the meeting. A new field has been opened, and an encouraging field it appears to be. The people did not swarm upon the ground from curiosity, as at our first meeting in Brighton, and as at Ashfield last year. The majority came straight to the large meeting tent, where they listened intently to the word; and when meeting was over, they quietly returned to their homes, or gathered in groups to ask questions or discuss what they had heard.

The interest steadily increased from the beginning of the meeting. The evening discourses, given by Elders Prescott, Corliss, and Daniells, all presented the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. Hardly a discourse was given during the whole meeting that could be called a doctrinal sermon. In every sermon Christ was preached, and as the great and mysterious truths regarding his presence and work in the hearts of men were made clear and plain, the truths regarding his second coming, his relation to the Sabbath, his work as Creator, and his relation to man as the source of life, appeared in a glorious and convincing light that sent conviction to many hearts. With solemnity the people said, "We have listened to truth tonight."

A Bible study was usually given at three o'clock each afternoon. These studies followed the same lines as the evening discourses, and they were regularly attended by scores besides those living on the camp-ground. The forenoons were mostly occupied by meetings of the Australian and Union Conferences, the tract society, the Sabbath-school association, and the publishing and school interests.

The early morning hour, before breakfast, was set apart and generally observed as a silent hour for individual study and prayer. Occasionally, a general meeting was held at this hour. We have found blessing in setting apart a season when every soul could feel that there was time to pray and to study the word of God without interruption. The half-past eight morning hour was devoted alternately to district prayer-meetings and general social meetings. Although quite feeble during most of the meeting, the Lord has strengthened me to bear my testimony here. During the three weeks of the meeting I have usually spoken Sabbath, Sunday, and Wednesday afternoons, besides short talks in the morning meetings.

Sabbath morning, Oct. 19, Elder Corliss gave valuable instruction to our people. In the afternoon, I spoke from the fourth chapter of John, dwelling upon the conversation of Christ with the woman of Samaria, in which he said, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." A testimony meeting followed, in which praise and glory were given to God for his unspeakable goodness and matchless love to fallen man in giving Jesus, his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. All seemed to have a desire to lift up Jesus higher and still higher.

Some outsiders took part, one minister testifying that the blessing of God was in the meeting, and that it was good to be there....

Sunday morning, Elder Wilson, from New Zealand, gave a most profitable, although plain and simple, discourse. It was beautiful in its simplicity. The simpler the teaching, the more the under shepherd represents the Chief Shepherd. In the afternoon the tent was full to overflowing. Quite a number stood on the outside, and all listened with deep interest, and the Lord strengthened me as I bore a plain testimony to the people, dwelling especially upon our obligation to acknowledge God in all our ways, and to seek more and more to obtain a knowledge of God, as presented in Christ's prayer in the seventeenth chapter of John.

In the evening Professor Prescott gave a most valuable lesson, precious as gold. The tent was full, and many stood outside. All seemed to be fascinated with the word, as he presented the truth in lines so new to those not of our faith. Truth was separated from error, and made, by the divine Spirit, to shine like precious jewels. It was shown that perfect obedience to all the commandments of God is essential for the salvation of souls. Obedience to the laws of God's kingdom reveals the divine in the human, sanctifying the character.

In visiting the people with the *Echoes*, and inviting them to the meetings, one of the workers met a woman who had been keeping the Sabbath for about twelve months. She had never heard the living preacher, but in studying the Bible she was convicted that she was keeping the wrong day, that the seventh day was the true Bible Sabbath. She is now attending the meetings, and feasting upon the truth. There are many interesting cases developing, that are just on the point of taking their stand.

The Lord is working in power through his servants who are proclaiming the truth, and he has given brother Prescott a special message for the people. The truth comes from human lips in demonstration of the Spirit and power of God.

The meetings have been well attended by the people of Armadale and Malvern, both afternoons and evenings, and on Sundays and Wednesdays large numbers have come from the distant suburbs. The people say: "You cannot appreciate the change of feeling about your meeting and work. It has been commonly reported that you do not believe in Christ. But we have never heard Christ preached as at these meetings." "There is no life in our churches. Everything is cold and dry. We are starving for the Bread of Life. We come to this camp-meeting because there is food here." As they see our stenographers reporting the discourses, they plead that they be printed soon, and placed within their reach. One who is a Sunday-school teacher, took copious notes of Elder Prescott's discourse on "God and Caesar," and then made copies for two ministers who were interested in the subject.

On every side we hear discussion of the subjects presented at the camp-meeting. One day as Elder Corliss stepped out of a train, the guard [conductor] stopped him with the request that he explain Col. 2:16. They stopped, and as the crowd rushed by, the explanation was given, and from Lev. 23:37, 38 it was shown that there were sabbaths besides the Sabbath of the Lord. Earnest requests have been sent in that some of the addresses be given in the Melbourne town hall.

As two gentlemen were coming to a Sabbath afternoon service, one remarked to the other, "These are a strange people. All we shall hear will be Moses and Sinai. After the meeting, he came to Elder Daniells, and expressed very great surprise at what he had heard. He told him what they had said, and added that he could hardly believe his ears. He had heard nothing but the plain gospel. Another man who had been considerably opposed to the work was prevailed upon to attend one of the meetings, and has since told a friend that it will be a distinct loss to the spiritual interests of the community when the Adventists go away; for Christ has been indeed exalted in these meetings.

A former Wesleyan local preacher's family are all interested, and thoroughly convinced of the truth. Even the children ask why they should "keep the pope's Sunday when they know it is not the true Sabbath." A lady who lives some distance away has been reading the *Echo*, and came here expressly to attend some of the meetings. In the very first one she attended, Professor Prescott made a call for those who would follow the Lord to stand. She arose, and has since been baptized....

Camp-meetings are a success in arresting the attention of the people. Many who attended the Brighton meeting two years ago have been present at the Armadale meeting. They went through that meeting without deciding to obey the truth, but are manifesting a greater interest here, and some have taken their position now in obedience to the truth. Twenty were baptized, Sunday, Nov. 10.

—Melbourne, Nov. 21

THE LAW IN CHRIST; OR, THE RELATION BETWEEN THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

All that man has lost through sin has been restored "through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy [undo] the works of the devil." 1 John 3:8. All this is accomplished for us, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Titus 3:5, 6.

And yet God does not make His plan of salvation effective for any individual without his co-operation. God has honoured man by bestowing upon him reasoning powers and the freedom of choice, and while man can by no means save himself, yet it is not God's plan to save him contrary to his will. He says to him: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa. 1:18. "He that will [willeth or chooseth] let him take of the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17, R. V.

In the beginning "God created man in His own image," "in the likeness of God made He him." But this image has been marred and well nigh obliterated by sin. Yet "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16), that thus through Him, "who is the image of the invisible God," man might be "created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. 2:10), and restored to the image of God, by being "conformed to the image of His Son." Rom. 8:29. The wondrous provisions of God's grace whereby "He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26) have nothing less than this in view, that "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." 1 Cor. 15:49.

The agency employed by God to bring about this result is called "the gospel," which is defined to be "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. 1:16. It is "the gospel of your salvation," "the gospel of the grace of God," "the gospel of peace," the same gospel which was "preached before … unto Abraham" (Gal. 3:8), and afterwards to the children of Israel, "for unto us was the gospel preached, *as well as unto them*." Heb. 4:2. This

---

Published Armadale Sermons

(See page 8 to obtain all 8 sermons.)

1. October 20, 1895 Talk, "Abiding in Christ and Walking in Christ," *The Bible Echo*, December 2 & 9, 1895
2. October 23, 1895 Talk, "Sermons in Stone," *The Bible Echo*, December 16 & 23, 1895
3. October 23, 1895 Talk, "The Kingdom of God; or The Great Controversy Between Good and Evil," *The Bible Echo*, February 17 & 24, 1896
4. October 31, 1895 Talk, "The Word Became Flesh," *The Bible Echo*, January 6 & 13, 1896
5. November 2, 1895 Talk, "The Faith of Jesus, The Commandments of God, and The Patience of the Saints," *The Bible Echo*, January 20 & 27, 1896
6. November 5, 1895 Talk, "God or Caesar, Which?," *The Bible Echo*, March 2, 9, & 16, 1896
7. November 9, 1895 Talk, "Christ Our Example," *The Bible Echo*, February 3 & 10, 1896
8. 1895 undated Talk, "The Law in Christ," *The Bible Echo*, April 20 & 27, May 4, 11, 18, & 25, June 1, 1896. This talk begins above, and will conclude in the next issue.

Editor's Note: When Prescott's presentation "The Law in Christ", which had been published in Australia both in *The Bible Echo* and as a pamphlet, was sent to Battle Creek for publishing by the Review and Herald, the editorial committee rejected it on the basis of doctrinal error. Thus the spiritual confusion seen at Minneapolis continued into the latter part of the 1890's to resist the light of truth. (The tie to Minneapolis is clear from the observation about the 1896 Ellen White letter, noted at the end of the next issue of *Lest We Forget*.)

gospel of Christ is God's divine power to save believers, "for therein is the righteousness of God revealed." Rom. 1:17. The righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel; and for that reason the gospel "is the power of God unto salvation." It is salvation from sin and restoration to a life of righteousness which are needed, and this experience is provided for us through the incarnation, the death, and the resurrection of Christ, who "was made in the likeness of men," and "who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Rom. 4:25. But this is the gospel; for we read: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel … by which also ye are saved…. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." 1 Cor. 15:1-4.

The efficacy of the gospel is also presented in these words: "For Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the gospel; not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." 1 Cor. 1:17, 18. The gospel is the *power of God* to every one that believeth. A discourse concerning the cross is, to those who are saved, the *power of God*, because the cross of Christ—Christ the crucified Saviour dying for sin—is the central thought of the gospel. So also we read again: "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, *Christ the power of God* and the wisdom of God." 1 Cor. 1:23, 24.

From these scriptures it is evident that the efficacy of the gospel, its power to salvation, is found in the fact that it is "God's joyful message … concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord," who is "The Lord our Righteousness." Jer. 23:6. Thus it appears that the gospel becomes the power of God unto salvation because of the righteousness which is revealed in it, and that this righteousness is found only in Christ, and is inseparable from Him. This is "the hope of the gospel … which is Christ in you the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." "And ye are complete in Him."

Wrong views concerning our relation to God's plan of salvation for us have arisen from failing to comprehend the fulness of the character of God. While it is true that "He delighteth in mercy" and "taketh pleasure … in those that hope in His mercy," it is also true that He is "of purer eyes than to behold evil," and that He will "execute judgment and justice in the earth." God requires that His own character, as revealed in Christ, should be the standard of character for His children. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:48. "But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." 1 Peter 1:15.

And abundant provision has been made in Christ that the expectation of God for man may be fully met. For He "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places [or things] in Christ," and "hath chosen us in Him … that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love," and "hath made us accepted in the beloved." Eph. 1:3, 4, 6. But all this is for a definite purpose. It is that we "being made free from sin and become servants to God " (Rom. 6:22) should be found "righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." Luke 1:6. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people *from* their sins." Matt. 1:21. But there is no provision made to save people *in* their sins.

In order that man may intelligently cooperate with God in His purpose to restore His image in him, God has made a revelation to man of His own character as the standard of perfection, and the test of righteousness. Since God designs to renew His likeness in us, we may know what He is by what He requires of us. The holiness, the righteousness, and the goodness of God are set forth in His law, which is declared to be "holy, just [righteous] and good," and the perfection which He requires of us will be revealed in a life which is in harmony with "that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Rom. 12:2.

Because "a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 2:16), and because we "are not under the law but under grace" (Rom. 6:14), some have fallen into the error of supposing that Christians have nothing whatever to do with the law of God. It is therefore well worth our while to consider the purposes served by the law, and the relation between the law and the gospel.

In order that it may be true of us that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7), we must "confess our sins" (1 John 1:9), and we

must be made aware of sin before we can confess it. This brings out the first purpose of the law, for by the law is the knowledge of sin (Rom. 3 :20), and "I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Rom. 7:7. The way in which the law reveals sin appears from the fact that "all unrighteousness is sin " (1 John 5:17), and that the law reveals unrighteousness by defining righteousness. The law, being a transcript of the righteous character of God, is used by the Holy Spirit to "reprove the world of sin" (John 16:8), by showing men that they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev. 3:17) when their own characters are placed in contrast with the purity and holiness of God. When we thus see God we exclaim with Isaiah, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips" (Isa. 6:5), and with Job we say, "I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." Job 42:6. All this is made plain in the Scripture. "Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and upright are Thy judgments. Thy testimonies that Thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful!" "My tongue shall speak of Thy word; for all Thy commandments are righteousness." Ps. 119:137, 138, 172.

Concluded next issue

For all eight Prescott Armadale Sermons ($6.95),
contact: 1888 Message Study Committee
8784 Valley View Dr
Berrien Springs MI 49103
Phone: 616-473-1888 Web: www.1888msc.org

Lest We Forget

Volume 10 Number 3
EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: Fred Bischoff, Gary Foster, Ray and Frances Foster, Marlene Steinweg
LOGO: Donna Wical
RESEARCH & LAYOUT: Fred Bischoff

Copyright © 2001

SUBSCRIPTIONS:
One Year (4 issues) US$10 in N. America
Overseas: US$15
Three Years (12 issues)US$25 in N. America
Overseas: US$40
Back Issues: Inquire at addresses given

Adventist Pioneer Library

- Repeating the words of the pioneers through periodicals, books, and CD-ROM
- A service of Health Ministry Foundation, Inc., a California Nonprofit Corporation, Member of A.S.I (Adventist-Laymen's Services and Industries)
- Visit APL on the web at www.tagnet.org/apl
- E-mail: apl@netbox.com

Health Ministry Foundation Inc
Adventist Pioneer Library
P O Box 383
Loma Linda CA 92354-0383

Address Service Requested

Nonprofit
US POSTAGE PAID
Loma Linda, CA
Permit No. 12

VOLUME 10 *FOURTH QUARTER 2000* NUMBER 4

ADVENTIST PIONEER LIBRARY

Lest We Forget

"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history." LS196

The Law in Christ; or, The Relation Between the Law and the Gospel

W. W. Prescott Armadale Sermon

Continued from Vol. 10, No. 3

But while the law thus makes known sin to us by setting forth the righteous character of God, and being itself righteousness, it is yet utterly unable to confer that righteousness upon us. "I do not frustrate the grace of God; for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." Gal. 2:21. "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." Gal. 3:21, 22. Here is where the work of Christ avails for us, and the very object of that work is that the righteousness *defined* by the law, and *revealed* in the gospel, may be fulfilled in us. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8:3, 4. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Cor. 5:21.

The work accomplished by Christ in behalf of man is more than to pay the penalty for a broken law; it includes the bringing of man into harmony with that law.

The righteousness of the law was fulfilled by Christ, who did "not come to destroy, but to fulfil" the law, and who by a life of perfect obedience to the Father's will, wherein He "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," was "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. 1:30. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 5:19-21.

The work accomplished by Christ in behalf of man is more than to pay the penalty for a broken law; it includes the bringing of man into harmony with that law. He "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus 2:14. For this it became necessary not only that righteousness should be *imputed* to us, but *imparted* to us; not only that Christ should live *for* us, but that He should live *in* us; not only that we should be "*justified* by faith " (Rom. 5:1), but that we should be "*sanctified* by faith." Acts 26:18. So the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory [His character], the

glory [the character] as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." John 1:14. Angels could convey messages for God, and could do deeds for God, but only the Son of God could reveal the righteousness of God by being God.

In His life among men Christ became the righteousness which was defined in the law. "The law was given by Moses but grace and truth [grace and the reality] came by Jesus Christ." John 1:17. In the law, considered merely as a code, we have only the form of truth, but Christ is the Truth. "Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest His will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which has *the form* of knowledge and of the truth in the law." Rom. 2:17-20. The law gives the *form*, but Christ is the *reality*. Christ had the law in His *heart*, and so His life was the law in living characters. This was set forth in the prophecy concerning His work centuries before He was "made of a woman": "I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart." Ps. 40:8.

In His teaching Christ interpreted the spiritual character of the law, showing that to hate was to commit murder, to think impurely was to commit adultery, to covet was to be an idolater, and His life was so completely in harmony with the sacred precepts as interpreted by Him that He could challenge those who were constantly seeking something against Him with the inquiry, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" John 8:46.

And He "who did no sin" (1 Peter 2:22) wrought out this life of perfect righteousness not for Himself but for us, that the image of God might be again revealed in our lives. The law was within the heart of Christ, and He came to do the will of God, in order that the same law might be written in our hearts, and that we might be restored to the blessedness of doing God's will; that the *form* might become the *reality* in us. This is accomplished for each individual by his acceptance of the work of Christ for him through faith in the word of God, by opening the door of his heart to Christ, that He may become the very life of his life, so that he may be "saved by His life." Rom. 5:10. This is righteousness by faith. This is being "found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Phil. 3: 9.

Thus we see that the law first gives knowledge of sin. It sets up a perfect standard of righteousness, and so defines the righteousness required; but it cannot confer that righteousness. It does not make one a sinner; it simply reveals the fact that he is a sinner. It cannot give righteousness; it simply shows the need of righteousness. But God, who requires the righteousness of the law in our characters, has made provision that this righteousness shall be brought to us in Christ, who is the centre of the gospel. The standard of character which is defined by the law is presented to us in Christ in the gospel. So we read: "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory [the character] of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness; that He might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. 3:21-26. By the law sin is revealed; in the gospel righteousness is revealed. By the law the disease is made known; in the gospel of Christ the cure is found. This is the first step in the relation between the law and the gospel.

After we have come to Christ and are justified by faith, without the deeds of the law (Rom. 3: 28), after we have become "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3: 26), having received Him who is righteousness and the living law, what then is our relation to the law? This will perhaps best appear by considering the results of genuine faith in Christ.

To believe on Christ is to receive Christ; not to assent to a creed, but to accept *a life*; not to strive for the maintenance of certain outward forms, but to become "partakers of the divine nature." 2 Peter 1:4. Creeds and forms cannot save people from their sins. Terrible is the catalogue of the sins of those "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." 2 Tim. 3:1-5. A new life must be imparted before man can "live unto God." "Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation." Gal. 6:15, R.V. This experience depends upon the faith

which each one exercises for himself, and "it is of faith, that it might be by grace." Rom. 4:16. To all who sincerely pray the prayer, "Create in me a clean heart," (Ps. 51:10), the reply comes, "Believe ye that I am able to do this? … According to your faith be it unto you." Matt. 9:28, 29. "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4); but faith for victory is the "faith which worketh by love." Gal. 5: 6.

"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Rom. 3:31. "This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our Christ made present with all His glorious power by faith;" but this is the Christ in whose heart is the law of God; who said of Himself, "I have kept my Father's commandments" (John 15:10); who was and is the law of God in life, so that when the prayer, "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith" (Eph. 3:17), is answered, the law in Christ is "written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." 2 Cor. 3:3. And thus do we establish the law.

By the law sin is revealed; in the gospel righteousness is revealed. By the law the disease is made known; in the gospel of Christ the cure is found.

"Where there is not only belief in God's word, but a submission of the will to Him—where the heart is yielded to Him, the affections fixed upon Him, there is faith, faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Through this faith the heart is renewed in the image of God. And the heart that in its unrenewed state is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, nor delights in its holy precepts." "God is love." 1 John 4:8. His law is an expression of His love, and Christ is that law of love expressed in life; so when we receive Christ into our hearts, then love, the fruit of the Spirit, is received into our hearts, and "when the principle of love is implanted in the heart, … the new covenant promise is fulfilled, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them" (Heb. 8:10)[SC60]; for "love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. 13:10. And thus do we "establish the law" by faith.

But after the law is thus by faith established in the heart by abiding in Christ, and having Him, who is the living law, abide in us, then the fruit of such a union with Christ will appear in the life. "He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit" (John 15:5), and thus are we "filled with the fruits of righteousness." Phil. 1:11. And now the law, which revealed sin but could not confer righteousness, witnesses to the character of the righteousness which we have received through faith in Christ. "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets." Rom. 3:21. The law reveals sin by defining righteousness, by showing us the character of God. The gospel reveals righteousness. "Therein is the righteousness of God revealed." Rom.1:17. We receive this righteousness as the free gift of God in receiving Jesus Christ. The law cannot give us what we need. It urges us to Christ, where we receive what it demands but cannot bestow. Then we return to the same law, and it bears witness to the fact that the righteousness we have received in Christ Jesus is the very righteousness which it demands but cannot impart.

This was God's plan for those who would believe in Christ. "God offered them in His Son the perfect righteousness of the law." [MB54.] If they would open their hearts fully to receive Christ, then the very life of God, His love, would dwell in them, transforming them into His own image; and thus through God's free gift they would possess the righteousness which the law requires.

The words "abolish," "take away, "destroy," and "change" have been so persistently connected with the law by some public teachers that there exists in the minds of many people the honest conviction that all which is expressed by these words was done to the law by Christ. It is true that He came to "abolish" something, and to "take away" something, and to "destroy" something, and to "change" something; but it is important that we-should know just what it was that He abolished, and what it was that He took away, and what it was that He destroyed, and what it was that He intended to change by His work in behalf of man. This we can easily learn from the Scriptures.

WHAT WAS ABOLISHED.

It is said of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, that He "hath *abolished death*, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." 2 Tim. 1:10. Death is the result of sin. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James 1:15. But "sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. Christ, therefore, came to abolish that which is the result of being out of harmony with the law, and He did it, not by abolishing the law, but by bringing us into harmony with the law.

WHAT WAS TAKEN AWAY.

We read that Christ "was manifested to *take away our sins*." 1 John 3:5. He is the sin-bearer, "who His own self carried up our sins in His body to the tree, that we having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness." 1 Peter 2:24, R.V., margin. Sin is lawlessness, and Christ was manifested to take away, not the law, but lawlessness.

WHAT HE CAME TO DESTROY.

The attitude of Christ toward the law is set forth in the prophecy which says: "He will magnify the law and make it honourable." Isa. 42:21. In His sermon on the mount, which is itself but the interpretation of the principles contained in the words spoken from Mount Sinai, Christ said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am, not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Matt. 5:17. He "came to explain the relation of the law of God to man, and to illustrate its precepts by His own example of obedience." But we are taught that "for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might *destroy the works of the devil*." 1 John 3:8. The works of the devil are those which are contrary to God's law. "The devil sinneth from the beginning," and in every case "sin is the transgression of the law."

Furthermore, Christ came to destroy the devil himself. Satan had introduced into this world rebellion against God and His law, and Christ's mission and work were to put an end to that rebellion and the instigator of it. In order to do that, He took our flesh, "that through death He might *destroy him that had the power of death*, that is the devil." Heb. 2:14.

WHAT HE CAME TO CHANGE.

It is a blessed thing to know that a change was wrought by Christ in giving Himself for man. There was certainly need that a change should be made. Men were far from righteousness, "being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them" (Eph. 4:18), "having no hope and without God in the world." Eph. 2:12. "But God, who is rich in mercy, … hath quickened us together with Christ, … and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Eph. 2:4-6. And thus "we all … are *changed into the same image* from glory to glory." 2 Cor. 3:18. But more even than a change of character has been provided for us, for "we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who *shall change our vile body*, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." Phil. 3:20, 21. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." 1 Cor. 15:51, 52. Glorious change! A renewed character and a renewed body! This is the fulness of the salvation provided for us in Jesus Christ.

It thus becomes evident from the teaching of the Scriptures that Christ came to abolish, not, the law, but death; to take away, not the law, but our sins; to destroy, not the law, but the devil and his works; to change, not the law, but us. He did all this "by the sacrifice of Himself." Heb. 9:26. If the law could have been changed or abolished, Christ need not have died.

SIN TRANSIENT; THE LAW ETERNAL.

In different ways God teaches that sin is transient, while the law is eternal. While Jesus was teaching on one occasion "the scribes and Pharisees brought unto Him a woman taken in adultery," and asked what should be done in such a case, not because they desired to be instructed, but "tempting Him, that they might have to accuse Him." After her accusers had made their charge, "Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground." John 8:3, 6. "Although doing this without apparent design, Jesus was tracing on the ground, in legible characters, the particular sins of which the woman's accusers were guilty." Thus Jesus wrote the record of sins *in the sand*. How easily could this record be obliterated! A gust of wind or a dash of water, and it is gone! But God wrote His law with His finger *upon tables of stone*,—an unchangeable and imperishable record of His own character. This same law He writes in the heart of the believer, there to remain to all eternity; for "he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." 1 John 2:17. Sin, and death the result of sin, may be taken away; for "the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7), and "death is swallowed up in victory, (1 Cor. 15:54), but "all Thy commandments are righteousness" and "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness." Ps.119:172, 142. "Hearken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My law;" "My salvation shall be forever, and My righteousness shall not be abolished." Isa. 51:7, 6. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day, yea, and forever." Heb. 13:8, R.V.

The very charge made against God by Satan was that His plan of government was defective, and His law im-

perfect, and the whole controversy between Christ and Satan has been waged over this point: Shall God's rule be acknowledged and His law respected in this world, or shall the rebellion succeed, and the kingdom of Satan be established here? Is it not clear, therefore, that everyone who today takes the position that God's law has been changed or abolished is really putting himself on the side of the "god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4) and in opposition to "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"? Eph.1:3. But God will show to the satisfaction of the universe, even in the very face of Satan's work, that His law is perfect and His government just. "Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest." Rev. 15:4.

A STANDARD NEEDED.

But if God's law has been changed or abolished, there is no longer any standard by which to test the character of the righteousness which men claim to have received by faith. Each one is then at liberty to erect his own standard to suit his own inclinations. Such teaching as this is now bearing its legitimate fruit in the world. God's holy law is not brought to bear upon the consciences of men to convince of sin, as in former days; hence the need of the Saviour is not felt to the same degree; and without a standard with which to test their professed righteousness, the counterfeit passes for the genuine, and religion is reproached. It is universally acknowledged that there is need of having a standard in all the transactions between man and man, and so we have the standard of weight, the standard of measure, etc. Without these standards there would be the utmost confusion in the business world. Moreover, these standards must not be variable. A variable standard is no standard at all. But is man wiser than God? "Were men free to depart from the Lord's requirements, and set up a standard of duty for themselves, there would be a variety of standards to suit different minds, and the government would be taken out of the Lord's hands. The law of self would be erected, the will of man would be supreme, and the high and holy will of God—His purpose of love toward His creatures—would be dishonoured, disrespected." [MB51, 52.]

We cannot meet the standard except as we receive Christ; but when we have received Christ, we know we have that which will meet the test. If anyone could be admitted to the kingdom who was out of harmony with God's law, sin would be transferred into the world to come.

OFFICE OF THE LAW.

The office of the law in making known sin, and in witnessing to the righteousness obtained through faith in Christ may be illustrated by the way in which a mirror is used. A man may learn by looking into it that his face is smirched with smut. The mirror did not put the smut there, neither can it take it away. It simply reveals its presence. Some other means must be used to remove the dirt; but when this is done, the same mirror testifies that his face is clean. But suppose the man should destroy or throw away the mirror because it revealed the presence of the dirt, and yet, not fully satisfied with this course, should endeavour to make himself clean, what will now satisfy him of the success of his efforts? He may *feel* better because he has made some effort to be clean; but at the same time he may have done only an incomplete work, or he may have made matters worse. So we are defiled by sin. The law reveals that fact, yet cannot cleanse; but there is "a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech. 13:1), in which we may wash and be clean. The law testifies to the character of the work wrought for us by "Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood." Rev. 1:5. But if the law is variable or has been abolished, we are left in uncertainty. Then self-righteousness may pass for righteousness because one *feels* satisfied in trying to meet the standard which he himself has set up.

THE PLEDGE OF AN IMMUTABLE LAW.

The fact that the law of God is not done away, is the pledge of our security in heaven. "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." James 2:12. That law is the standard in the judgment. Harmony with the law of God is the condition of the entrance into the kingdom. Everyone who applies for admission is tested by it. The law is a transcript of God's character. Everyone must meet this standard in its perfection, and those who do not reach it are shut out of the kingdom. We cannot meet the standard except as we receive Christ; but when we have received Christ, we know we have that which will meet the test. If anyone could

be admitted to the kingdom who was out of harmony with God's law, sin would be transferred into the world to come. The very fact that the law of God is neither changed nor abolished is our safety in the eternal kingdom, the pledge that "affliction shall not rise up the second time."

THE LAW OUT OF CHRIST AND THE LAW IN CHRIST.

Observe the difference between the law of God as a rigid code and the same law coming to us in Christ. A command which out of Christ is a rigid code, in Christ becomes a living promise. The law, out of Christ, simply a rigid code, says, "Thou shalt," and "thou shalt not." But that same law in Christ becomes a living promise. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises." 2 Pet. 1:4. "In every command or injunction that God gives, there is a promise, the most positive, underlying the commandment." [MB76.] When we read: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," that is clearly a promise. When we read in the law: "Thou shalt not kill," we read it out of Christ simply as a command, or we may know it in Christ as a living promise. That is, He in His life promises each one, "Thou shalt not kill." I cannot of myself help hating, which is breaking the sixth commandment. I am trying not to do it, and yet I do it. I turn about, and find that that same command in Christ, written by the Spirit of the living God on the fleshy tables of the heart, has brightened into a promise, and it says, "I have a promise to make to you. You have received Me; you shall not kill."

Outside of Christ, as a code, the law says, " Thou shalt not steal;" but I cannot help it. Then I turn about, and find that that law in Christ has brightened into a promise, and it reads to me, "You are the one that has been stealing. I have a promise to make to you. You shall not steal."

The law reveals sin by defining righteousness, and then drives us to Christ, who is the centre of the gospel. There the righteousness of the law is revealed.

COMPLETE OBEDIENCE.

Partial obedience is a very thorny path; full obedience is the easy yoke promised us. When we tell the Lord that we will keep all His commandments, He immediately takes possession of us, and says we shall. We do not abolish the law through faith; on the contrary, "it is faith, and faith only, that makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience." [SC60, 61.] But this is accomplished, not by commanding the believer, "Thou shalt," but by shedding abroad in his heart the love of God which gives him the blessed assurance of "Thou wilt." Not, thou must fulfil the law, else thou canst not live; but, because thou art now living in "the Living One," thou wilt fulfil the law. This is righteousness by faith. This is the gospel.

The same standard of righteousness has been set before man in all ages. In olden time the instruction was: "Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." Eccl. 12:13. And the death of Christ did not make any change in this teaching; for "circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God" (1 Cor. 7:19), and "this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:3. Furthermore, the provision has been the same in all ages for meeting this standard of righteousness. The Lord said of old, through the prophet: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and *cause you to walk in My statutes*, and *ye shall keep My judgments*, and do them." Ezek. 36:26, 27. The same ground of hope for success in the Christian life is held out to us in the inspired prayer of the great apostle: "Now the God of peace, … *make you perfect* in every good work *to do His will*, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ." Heb. 13:20, 21.

A SUMMARY.

We are now prepared to summarise the results of our study upon the relation between the law and the gospel. We have found that the law reveals sin by defining the standard of righteousness, and that in the gospel the righteousness required by the law is revealed. We have found that the gospel is the gospel *of Christ*, and that the righteousness which is revealed in it is the righteousness wrought out for us by Christ through a life of perfect obedience to the law of God. Thus the gospel is God's provision not merely for fulfilling the requirements of the law *for* us in Christ, but also for fulfilling the requirements of the same law *in* us through Christ, and this is accomplished by receiving Christ, the very embodiment of the law, into our hearts by faith, so that "it

is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me." Gal. 2:20, R.V., margin.

The fruit of such a union with Christ is seen in a life which is in harmony with that same law which was the inspiration of His life, and the law which at first revealed sin now bears witness to the genuine character of that righteousness "which is by faith of Jesus Christ." And thus what the law could not do in that it was weak through our flesh, has been done for us by putting that same law into the flesh in Christ, and through Him into our flesh, "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8:4.

This brings us to the conclusion that THE GOSPEL IS SIMPLY THE LAW IN CHRIST, and therefore an attempt to abolish the law is an attempt to abolish Christ and the gospel, and an attempt to change the law is in attempt to change the character of Christ and to thwart the purpose of the gospel. A heart filled with love to Christ and the spirit of truth will seek no such results, but will thankfully say: "Abundant peace have they who love Thy law; and it is no stumbling block to them." Ps. 119:165, Spurrill's Translation. See margin of A.V.

What the law could not do in that it was weak through our flesh, has been done for us by putting that same law into the flesh in Christ, and through Him into our flesh.

(*The Bible Echo*, April 20 & 27, May 4, 11, 18, & 25, June 1, 1896; the original had quoted but unreferenced statements from Ellen White's writings; these have been noted by bracketed references.)

Tie to Minneapolis

[Editorial Note: A highly significant correlation exists between Prescott's document "The Law in Christ", and a letter Ellen White wrote five days after the last section of the document was published in *The Bible Echo* on June 1, 1896. This letter to Uriah Smith shows further the endorsement by the Holy Spirit of the insights that Prescott was sharing, and dates the concepts back to Minneapolis. The letter in its entirety follows.]

"Sunnyside" Cooranbong, N.S.W., June 6, 1896.
Eld. U. Smith,
Battle Creek, Mich.

Dear Brother:

(The enclosed pages present a few points which were opened to Sister White last night, and which she wished sent to you. She has for some days been suffering from the effects of cold and overwork, and is today unable to read or write. The matter was written out as she presented it. We sent some copies of articles and letters by the S.F. mail, which Sister White desired you to read; but as we were not certain that you were in Battle Creek, they were addressed to Elder Tenney, with direction that he read and forward to you. Yours in the work, M. Davis)

"The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." [Gal. 3:24.] In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. **The law reveals sin** to us, and causes us **to feel our need of Christ**, and to flee unto him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept **this truth**, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against **the Lord's message** through Brethren Waggoner and Jones. By exciting that opposition, Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. **The light that is to lighten the whole earth** with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world.

The law of ten commandments is not to be looked upon as much from the prohibitory side, as from the mercy side. Its prohibitions are the sure guarantee of happiness in obedience. As received **in Christ**, it works in us the purity of character that will bring joy to us through eternal ages. To the obedient it is a wall of protection. We behold in it the goodness of God, who by revealing to men the immutable principles of righteousness, seeks to shield them from the evils that result from transgression.

We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death.

The law is an expression of God's idea: when we receive it **in Christ** it becomes our idea; it lifts us above the power of natural desires and tendencies, above temptations that lead to sin. "**Great peace have they that love thy law**; and nothing shall offend them,"— cause them to stumble.

There is no peace in unrighteousness; the wicked are at war with God. But he who receives **the righteousness of the law in Christ** is in harmony with heaven. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." (Letter 96, 1896 to Uriah Smith, in *EGW 1888 Material*, pp. 1574-1576; emphasis supplied)

For all eight Prescott Armadale Sermons ($6.95), contact: 1888 Message Study Committee
8784 Valley View Dr
Berrien Springs MI 49103
Phone: 616-473-1888 Web: www.1888msc.org

Lest We Forget

Volume 10 Number 4
EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: Fred Bischoff, Gary Foster, Ray and Frances Foster, Marlene Steinweg
LOGO: Donna Wical
RESEARCH & LAYOUT: Fred Bischoff

Copyright © 2001

SUBSCRIPTIONS:
One Year (4 issues) US$10 in N. America
Overseas: US$15
Three Years (12 issues)US$25 in N. America
Overseas: US$40
Back Issues: Inquire at addresses given

Adventist Pioneer Library

- Repeating the words of the pioneers through periodicals, books, and CD-ROM
- A service of Health Ministry Foundation, Inc., a California Nonprofit Corporation, Member of A.S.I (Adventist-Laymen's Services and Industries)
- Visit APL on the web at www.tagnet.org/apl
- E-mail: apl@netbox.com

Health Ministry Foundation Inc
Adventist Pioneer Library
P O Box 383
Loma Linda CA 92354-0383

Address Service Requested

Nonprofit
US POSTAGE PAID
Loma Linda, CA
Permit No. 12